



Remember those who have served our country

Our world is a dangerous place and today we have more than 4,000 Kansas soldiers serving their country as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. In the past year, 10 soldiers from Kansas and 37 Ft. Riley soldiers have sacrificed their lives while fighting for freedom. As a mother of two, I can only imagine the pain and heartache that Kansas families go through as their children put themselves in harm's way.

Since the beginning of our Nation's history, America's brave men and women have willingly sacrificed their lives in defense of freedom to preserve our liberty at home and on foreign shores. In 1971, the United States Congress established the national observance of Memorial Day to honor the men and women who have fought and died in all of America's wars.

On this Memorial Day, we pause to honor the memory of the brave men and women who served their country so valiantly with dignity, and with honor, and those who made the ultimate sacrifice. My father, Jack Gilligan, is a Silver-Star Navy veteran, who returned safely from World War II, even though his destroyer was sunk. My uncle, Donald Dixon, was not so fortunate; he lost his life in the war. Memorial Day is an occasion of special importance for all Americans because it provides each of us the opportunity to honor our loved ones and friends who fought, and who still fight, to protect the liberties we enjoy. We must remember those men and women who are currently in harm's way protecting our freedom worldwide.

I urge all Kansans to remember, recognize, and honor on this special day those Americans who have lost their lives while serving the Nation in American wars. I encourage you to take part in ceremonies, parades, and other activities honoring soldiers and veterans.

God bless America and God bless Kansas.